

FINAL



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 16, 2009

**PRESENT:** TOM CLOW, CHAIRMAN; RICHARD W. BUTT, VICE CHAIRMAN; DONNA OSBORNE, SELECTMAN; JAMES DONISON, SELECTMAN; KEITH R. LACASSE, SELECTMAN

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Cherry Palmisano

**GUESTS:** Bill Tiffany, Jon Osborne, Mark Bluteau, Frederick W. Hippler, Mike Bluteau, Steve Roberts, Vanessa Hippler, Frederick A. Hippler, Frank Campana, Evelyn Connor, John McCausland, Scott Dinsmore, Sue Bulcock, Kyle Averill, Dave Hewey, Chris Hague, Paul Hague, Bob DeStefano, A. Dinsmore, Jan Snyder, Dan Macdonald - New Boston Fire Chief, Thomas French/Henniker Rescue Chief, Chris Ladue/Deering Assistant Chief, Jon Wiggin/Dunbarton Chief, Richard O'Brien/Goffstown Chief

**7:00 p.m. Chairman Clow called the meeting to order.**

Ms. Evelyn Connor swore in Mr. Jon Osborne and Mr. Ricky Hippler as Board of Fire Wards members.

Ms. Evelyn Connor swore in Mr. John McCausland as a member of the Trustees of the Trust Fund.

Ms. Evelyn Connor swore in Mr. Thomas Clow, Mrs. Donna Osborne and Mr. James Donison as Weare Selectman.

**Selectman Butt moved, Selectman Osborne seconded to nominate Thomas Clow as Chairman of the Board of Selectman. Passed 5-0-0**

**Selectman Lacasse moved, Selectman Donison seconded to nominate Richard Butt as Vice Chairman of the Board of Selectman. Passed 5-0-0**

**DEPARTMENT HEAD** – Ms. E. Connor announced there will be a Rabies Clinic at the Town Hall on April 8<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-6:30. The cost will be \$10.00 per shot.

Ms. E. Connor said there will be a recount on the Fire Works vote on Wednesday night at the Town Office at 7:00 p.m. The vote was 746 to 746 and if it is still a tie after the recount Ms. E. Connor said she would have to call the state to determine what happens.

Mrs. Christine Hague informed the Board she has a Capital Reserve Request, which was part of the approved request last year, from the Government Building and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. Mrs. Hague said they were unable to replace the door with the money that was approved. She has an estimate for \$2,000-\$2,500 which includes the door, panic bar, and side lights. The door will be leveled and he will guarantee his work. Chairman Clow said the request is for \$3,000. Mrs. Hague said she does not plan to utilize all the money but would like it available in case there is a need. Mrs. Hague received other estimates and was told there could be possible trouble in the area of the installation. Selectman Donison said he briefly looked at the purchasing policy which states a request for \$1,000-\$2,500 has to have a minimum of 3 written quotes. Mrs. Hague said she has several quotes. Mrs. Hague said she has other requests as well that she would like to discuss with the Board at a later time regarding masonry work and restoration of windows. Vice Chairman Butt said they have to establish priorities and understands this has been approved last year.

**Vice Chairman Butt moved, Selectman Osborne seconded to expend an amount not to exceed \$3,000 from the Government Building and Maintenance Fund to replace the damaged door at the Weare Public Library. Passed 5-0-0**

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Mr. Paul Hague, Vice Chairman of the Cable Committee, asked the Board to approve the modest request for 2 DVD players. Having 2 additional DVD players would allow them to program more material for automatic play back; they have 2 programmable DVD players at this time. Mr. Hague said the estimate comes from the company that has been doing all the work; Gregg Hall. Chairman Clow asked if the DVD players would be synchronized with each other and if that is why there is a need. Mr. Hague said they can play at any time. Mr. Hague said someone has to put the disk in the DVD player, but it can be programmed to broadcast. Mr. Hague said the Cable TV Capital Reserve Fund has a balance of approximately \$29,000; he is asking to spend \$850 for the DVD players. Vice Chairman Butt asked what other programs need to be broadcasted. Mr. Hague said they receive programs from the state and environmental videos which they would like to play. Selectman Butt asked how often the 2 DVD players they have are utilized. Mr. Hague said every week. Mr. Hague said it is being discussed that there might be the capability of downloading videos from the computer, but then there is a possibility of storage issues. Vice Chairman Butt mentioned that there was no additional cost to store a years worth of BOS meetings and is concerned with the need. Vice Chairman Butt said this isn't questioning whether the Cable Channel is appreciated, it is just they are trying to account for every penny and he is not sure that the need is there. Mr. Hague said there are only 2 volunteers who go into the Town Office to change the programming. Selectman Osborne feels this purchase would be very beneficial to the Cable Committee. Mr. Hague said their goal is to expand the Cable Channel. Vice Chairman Butt said if someone comes in once a week to change the videos, can't someone come in on the off week to change the videos. Selectman Donison asked Mr. Hague if he reviewed the Capital Reserve Language to make sure it is in line. Mr. Hague said yes.

**Selectman Osborne moved, Selectman Donison seconded expend \$850 to purchase 2 programmable DVD players with the funds to come out of the Community Access TV Equipment Fund. Passed 4-1-0**

Mr. Hague asked who is currently managing the IT person in the building. Chairman Clow said the BOS. Mr. Hague requested that the Board require him to remove his administrative password so they can access the system.

**MEETING WITH LOCAL FIRE CHIEFS** – Chairman Clow said on February 5, 2009 the BOS received a letter from the Fire Chiefs of Henniker, New Boston, Goffstown and Dunbarton requesting they meet regarding concerns of the load on their departments because of mutual aid to the Town of Weare.

Mr. Jon Wiggin, Dunbarton Fire Chief, led a PowerPoint presentation. Chief Wiggin said that the Fire Departments don't mind coming to Weare, they support each other, but the situation they have been living with for 2 years does not seem to be getting better. The Fire Chiefs have come together to discuss how the issue places a burden on the surrounding towns. It was discussed that Weare Rescue is making an inadequate number of their daytime rescue calls; other towns are responding to Weare 7-10%. Typically you should be going to other towns to supply Mutual Aid (MA) 1 call out of every 15-20 calls; Weare is tracking around 50% of the time. Chief Wiggins said the Weare Fire Department is doing a very good job but this supersedes them and it is a problem of the whole town. When they come out Weare they only have 1 ambulance in their own town and therefore it takes the ambulance out of their own towns. Chief Wiggins said their departments are having morale issues because of the amount of times they are responding to MA for Weare and leaving their jobs or families. This also adds extra operating expenses on other towns. The Chiefs perception is that they are subsidizing a problem vs. MA support that only Weare can fix. This problem is not unique to Weare.

### *Proactive Long Term Actions:*

1. Consult with Local Government Center to do an evaluation and explain to the public the dire need for improvement to support the town
2. Contract with a private ambulance service from 6 am to 6 pm.
3. Pay Weare or non Weare EMT's to be on call during the day (could be a stipend amount)
4. Implement a First Responder class for town employees, voluntary and allow them to respond to medical calls during the daytime hours
5. Advertise for new EMT members specifically targeting daytime hours, reimburse for all training

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### *Immediate Actions:*

1. Weare Selectmen to post a public notice referencing this current issue

Chief Wiggin said their people are taking the heat from the public of Weare for long response times.

2. For Alphas, Bravo and Omega levels calls requiring an ambulance, a private ambulance service should be used. These types of calls are considered typically non-emergency or non-life threatening type calls. For non emergency, non life threatening calls a private ambulance service should be used.

They will not take non emergency calls to the hospital; they will call a private ambulance service. Richard O'Brien, Goffstown Fire Chief said when someone calls 911 they are asked a list of questions and their answers determine the level of response, falls would be Alpha, breathing/heart attack would be Omega. A call could start as a Bravo but the patient could get worse and they are trying to find out how they can get there quicker.

3. MA towns provided with Weare FD run cards to review for potential improvements in MA requests/response times for ambulance calls.
4. MA ambulances will be requested via their dispatch centers based on the approved run cards developed by the MA department's review. There will be no option to alter these defined response procedures by the Town of Weare or its representatives.

Chief Wiggin said they need to assess which town should respond based upon the location of the emergency within the Town of Weare. Each town provides a MA plan based on locations. Chief Wiggin mentioned a situation where Dunbarton could not respond and Henniker was called. It took 45 minutes for them to respond and people were livid and took it out of the rescue personnel.

5. Change Weare procedures to require firefighters or other approved town employees who can drive the ambulance respond to the medical calls to increase the likelihood the ambulance will respond.

Chief Wiggin said they want to minimize their daytime involvement to Weare but will maximize whenever there is a need.

6. MA departments once dispatch, reserve the right to manage the call as their own and may include calling additional resources such as other Departments or private ambulance.
7. At the scene, MA departments reserve the right to utilize all Weare resources first to minimize the impact to the MA town. First choice is to use the Weare ambulance and Weare medical personnel with the MA department supplementing the Weare Department, rather than taking the patient in the MA ambulance, unless deemed appropriate by the MA department.

It was discussed they are getting questioned by their town's and Selectmen about the situation and the cost burden.

8. Request Base 100 tone out MA immediately after the end of the initial 6 minute response time from first tone out of Weare Rescue for daytime calls.

Chief Wiggin said it is easier if they start MA right away and then if they don't need them they will be sent back. This is to try and minimize how long the person who made the 911 call has to wait for service.

All the Fire Chiefs would like to see the Weare Selectmen post public notice referencing this current issue immediately. They want to help with the service they give to Weare and the service they give their towns.

9. Cost Model (except New Boston)

If patient transported fails to pay their final billing request from the ambulance company that transported, the Town of Weare will be responsible for the payment.

If the patient is not transported after the MA ambulance arrives to the scene, the Town of Weare will be billed on an hourly basis by the responding ambulance service. This cost will be in the range of \$100-\$250 an hour depending on the department and level of attendants on the ambulance.

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For MA calls responded to by New Boston, there will be a flat fee charged for all ambulance MA calls that require transport or are determined to be non-transport. This would pertain to requests for MA ambulance calls between 6am and 6pm (the fee scheduled is being defined at this time).

Vice Chairman Butt asked if the Town of Weare is being singled out because of the amount of calls. Chief O'Brien said when they bill a patient they typically bill the insurance company first. Vice Chairman Butt asked if charging Weare \$100-\$250 an hour depending on services if the patient is not transported is unique to the Town of Weare. Chief O'Brien said the question should be why MA had to come. Chief O'Brien said his Selectmen are asking why the costs are so high. If Goffstown used supplies on a Weare patient, and they can't bill the patient because they did not transport that patient, who pays? If it were 1 or 2 times a year they would eat the costs, but with Weare it is happening too frequently and it is becoming a cost issue for his department. Chairman Clow said the answer is it is unique to the Town of Weare. Chief Wiggin said if you look at the MA responses to other towns they would be spending 1% on costs for other towns, for Weare it is 7%-10%. Chairman Clow said there should be a set standard.

Chief Wiggin said there is a problem in Weare. Weare is getting free ambulance service at the cost of other towns and they are getting beat up by their Board of Selectmen and it does not help their town's morale. Dan Macdonald, New Boston Chief, said EMTs and firefighters don't do what they do for money; they do it to help people. Chairman Clow said his point was incorporating it across the board and Weare would pay more than other towns because the number of calls, but it would be a fair process.

They are trying to highlight the problem in Weare; they are not trying to make the Weare Fire Department look bad, they are trying to bring this to the public's attention. Thomas French, Henniker Rescue Chief, said as the town's grow they need to staff full time personnel to respond to the calls. They are trying to promote and improve the process.

Chief Wiggin said they are willing to help solve the problems. Chief French said the reason they recommend the evaluations is it gives validity to the town on why they need help. Chief Wiggin said they have the greatest respect for the Weare Fire Department. Chairman Clow said the Board of Fire Wards is in charge of the Fire Department and the BOS provides fiscal support but the ultimate responsibility from all departments comes back to the BOS. Chairman Clow said hiring a full time Fire Chief was on the ballot but did not pass. Chief Wiggin said there was no intent to pass the Board of Fire Wards, they feel it is a town wide problem and wanted to bring it to the public's attention.

Mr. Bob DeStefano, Weare Captain, knows they have a response problem in town during the day time hours. He said they tried requesting per diem and they tried requesting full time and it gets defeated. The truck got voted down because they didn't get the message out for the need and how there would be no tax impact. They all have on-call night, they are available but don't get paid, he is suggesting they pay people during the day to be on call. Having 2 people on cal, 5 days a week / 8 hours a day would total \$29,000 per year. There is \$460,000 in the truck account and they could use a portion of that to pay people to be on call. Chairman Clow said the only way the purpose of a Capital Reserve Fund could be changed is to go on the ballot to have it changed. Chief Wiggin said if the town was to follow that suggestion and was able to make those calls; the town would actually be saving money. Chairman Clow said they want to hear all the options. Captain DeStefano said another option would be to have per diem personnel at \$15.00 per hour for an EMT. He said option 3 would be to leave it the way it is and have to pay other towns to respond. Selectman Donison said they have 3 options and said it makes sense to have a work session to brainstorm all the available options.

Chief O'Brien said he would share the language from their Special Revenue Account. He said Goffstown's Special Revenue Account paid for a per diem employee and also pays for training. This was voted on by the voters, they have a separate ambulance budget. Deering sets up their fund like this as well to self fund the ambulance. Chairman Clow said they have a Capital Reserve Fund and Special Revenue Fund which is replenished through the ambulance revenue; both require a vote at town meeting to expend from. Ms. Jan Snyder said that fund is just for vehicle replacement, she is not sure if they can actually change it, she does not see why they can't change it to be a 50/50

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account. Ms. Snyder said it would have to be on the warrant for voter approval. Chairman Clow said they should get LGC or Primex involved and other town's who can come up with options and said asking outside sources adds validity.

Chief Wiggin said they discussed cost and billing issues, but they can't keep responding to calls beyond 15 minutes and thinking the patients won't have irreversible affects; the top of the list is the patient.

Lt. Harry Lamb said 4-5% of their calls are MA and commented that they don't get the information about the tiered levels of a call. He asked the chiefs out of the 7-10% of calls, how many are paramedic calls and medical intercepts. They are not broken out.

Vice Chairman Butt said the BOS was made aware of associated issues last spring; the Board of Fire Wards is working with an outside source to help the department with changes. Vice Chairman Butt commented that Chief Macdonald said this has been going on for 2 years and Vice Chairman Butt said it won't be changed in a couple of weeks. He hopes they give the town more time to check on funds to see if they can utilize the funds for personnel, make it more visible for the taxpayers. Vice Chairman Butt said people need to feel confident with the Fire Department and they all need to work together to improve the perception of the Fire Department. They need to put a well thought out plan in place. Vice Chairman Butt asked that MA towns give them some time. The chiefs would like to see wordage on the town's webpage about the situation, especially the situation during the day and the response times.

Chief French said their major goal was accomplished tonight, to open up communication and recognize the problem. Mr. Ricky Hippler informed the Board the mediator gave his results to the Board of Fire Wards and he said an outside study would help, the inside study has already been done. Mr. Hippler commented that the chiefs have said it has been a developing problem over the years, MA towns morale is going down, Weare is already down and he feels an outside study would benefit.

Vice Chairman Butt asked Mr. Tiffany if the new members of the Board of Fire Wards have had a meeting. Mr. Tiffany said they have attended, but were just sworn in tonight. Mr. Tiffany said the next step should be to get LGC and Primex in for discussions. Chairman Clow said they should somehow create an open door policy for people who are available during the day. Vice Chairman Butt would also like to see a Board member be a liaison to the other Boards to tighten communication. Selectman Lacasse asked if all the other MA towns have regular meetings together. Mr. Tiffany said not that he is aware. Selectman Lacasse said it would be beneficial if they were to meet quarterly and the town had a presence at the meeting to report back. Chairman Clow asked Mr. Tiffany if the Board of Fire Wards could meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month or another day of the week so that the BOS could attend the meeting. Mr. Tiffany said he will poll the members of the Board of Fire Wards. Chairman Clow said they don't want to take over their meetings, just keep the communications open. Selectman Donison said it is important to let the people of town know there is a delay in response time due to shortage of man power. Selectman Lacasse said some of the items on the list should be implemented immediately, like training.

Ms. Snyder said she pulled up the Town Reports online and looked up the Fire Departments and compared them to Weare and she said obviously they will need to have per diem personnel. Chairman Clow said Mr. Paul King did research on other towns our size and could not find a town with over 7,000 residents that did not have some full time staff. Selectman Osborne asked how many EMT personnel the town has. Mr. Tiffany said he thinks 35-40, maybe 30. Vice Chairman Butt said when looking at some town's operating budgets they include equipment, our equipment is set aside; but the most significant difference is payroll. Vice Chairman Butt said for a few years the BOS did not support articles for full time EMT but for the past 2 years they did.

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### MANIFESTS

**Chairman Clow moved, Vice Chairman Butt seconded, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sign Manifest and order the Deputy Treasurer to sign checks dated March 19, 2009. Passed 5-0-0**

|                         |                           |   |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Accounts payable</b> | <b>\$272,336.13</b>       | (\$250,000 to John Stark)                   |
| <b>Gross Payrolls</b>   | <b><u>\$41,053.09</u></b> | (includes Spec Detail, Credit Union, Taxes) |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>\$313,389.22</b>       |   |

Selectman Lacasse would like to get a discussion with Department Heads on the agenda to discuss overtime.

**Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Lacasse seconded to enter into non public session @ 9:16 p.m. pursuant to the authority granted in RSA 91-A:3, II (a). A roll call vote was taken, Vice Chairman Butt – yes; Selectman Osborne – yes; Selectman Donison – yes; Selectman Lacasse – yes; Chairman Clow – yes Passed 5-0-0**

**Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Lacasse seconded to come out of non public session @ 9:48 p.m. A roll call vote was taken, Vice Chairman Butt – yes; Selectman Osborne – yes; Selectman Donison – yes; Selectman Lacasse – yes; Chairman Clow – yes Passed 5-0-0**

**Selectman Lacasse moved, Vice Chairman Butt seconded to seal and restrict the minutes of the non public session. Passed 5-0-0**

### MEETING MINUTES

**Selectman Lacasse moved, Vice Chairman Butt seconded to accept the minutes of February 23, 2009 as amended. Passed 2-0-3**

**Vice Chairman Butt moved, Selectman Lacasse seconded to accept the minutes of March 2, 2009 as amended. Passed 3-0-2**

**Chairman Clow moved, Vice Chairman Butt seconded to approve the minutes of March 9, 2009 as amended. Passed 2-0-3**

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT** – Chairman Clow said PARC has cleaned out their belongings in the Conservation Room and said Andy Fulton will be contacted regarding the Conservation Commission paperwork. Vice Chairman Butt said they might get pressure to utilize funds from the Government Building and Maintenance Fund for sheet rocking some of the necessary areas in the Town Office. Vice Chairman Butt said the Board needs to discuss priorities and mentioned the Town Barn is leaking.

Chairman Clow distributed the report from Paul King regarding the Fire Department. Vice Chairman Butt feels the report was well done. The Board will review the report and discuss it on a future agenda. Vice Chairman Butt asked if a member of the Board should attend the next Board of Fire Wards meeting. Chairman Clow feels that one of them should be there as an observer.

Selectman Osborne shared her ideas she has regarding the default budget. Selectman Osborne feels no police car should go home with an officer out of town and they should remove 1 shift because of the overtime. She would like to get the report of the accident involving Jim Carney. Selectman Osborne suggests cutting back on the Wearites contributions and removing the PARC director (\$5,000). She feels they should have 1 Highway employee go in to start the trucks instead of having all the employees go in for overtime. Selectman Osborne said a Transfer Station employee gets overtime to plow and she feels they should have someone with a bigger truck do it and save overtime. Selectman Osborne said the Town Clerk's office at 1:00 on Thursday and suggested all departments close at 1:00 on Thursdays. Chairman Clow said they talked about having the department heads in to discuss the budget. Selectman Lacasse said to do it soon, not only for line item accountability but revenue shortfall. Vice Chairman Butt said they are going beyond line item accountability and are trying to instill responsibility within the departments. Vice Chairman Butt said if a department head is going to over spend a line in their budget they have to come before the Board and tell them why and where the money will come from within their department's budget. Vice Chairman Butt said if they are going to have a shortfall in revenue then they will need to cut things to keep the tax rate level.

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Chairman Clow said if you look at the total of the warrant articles and look at the ones that normally do pass; they are usually added into the budget to calculate the tax rate. Chairman Clow said the greater problem they will have beyond local is what happens in the state with the Room and Meals Tax. Vice Chairman Butt said they need to discuss funding the Retirement Fund. Selectman Lacasse said they need to discuss the saving up of vacation time.

**Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Lacasse seconded to enter into non public session @ 10:16 p.m. pursuant to the authority granted in RSA 91-A:3, II (e). A roll call vote was taken, Vice Chairman Butt – yes; Selectman Osborne – yes; Selectman Donison – yes; Selectman Lacasse – yes; Chairman Clow – yes Passed 5-0-0**

The Board discussed an unfair labor complaint filed against the Town of Weare and the Weare Police Department by the Police Union. The Board gave Chairman Clow permission to seek legal assistance in responding to the complaint.

**Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Lacasse seconded to come out of non public session @ 10:39 p.m. A roll call vote was taken, Vice Chairman Butt – yes; Selectman Osborne – yes; Selectman Donison – yes; Selectman Lacasse – yes; Chairman Clow – yes Passed 5-0-0**

## ADJOURNMENT

A True Record.

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Cherry Palmisano, Recording Secretary